

Washington, DC – U.S. Rep. John Hall (D-Dover) gave the following statement today after House Democrats unveiled updated health care legislation yesterday: H.R. 3692, Affordable Health Care for America act.

"The Affordable Health Care for America Act will slow the growth in out-of-control costs, introduce competition into the health care marketplace to keep coverage affordable and insurers honest, protect people's choices of doctors and health plans, and assure all Americans access to quality, stable, affordable health care," said Congressman Hall. "As I evaluate this proposal, I will be thinking of the input and stories I have heard from my constituents during the dozens of health care meetings and town halls I have held."

If enacted into law, the Affordable Health Care for America Act would make the following provisions take effect immediately:

- **BEGINS TO CLOSE THE MEDICARE PART D DONUT HOLE** — Reduces the donut hole by \$500 and institutes a 50% discount on brand-name drugs, effective January 1, 2010.
- **IMMEDIATE HELP FOR THE UNINSURED UNTIL EXCHANGE IS AVAILABLE (INTERIM HIGH-RISK POOL)** — Creates a temporary insurance program until the Exchange is available for individuals who have been uninsured for several months or have been denied a policy because of pre-existing conditions.
- **BANS LIFETIME LIMITS ON COVERAGE**—Prohibits health insurance companies from placing lifetime caps on coverage.
- **ENDS RESCISSIONS**—Prohibits insurers from nullifying or rescinding a patient's policy when they file a claim for benefits, except in the case of fraud.
- **EXTENDS COVERAGE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE UP TO 27TH BIRTHDAY THROUGH PARENTS' INSURANCE**— Requires health plans to allow young people through age 26 to remain on their parents' insurance policy, at the parents' choice.
- **ELIMINATES COST-SHARING FOR PREVENTIVE SERVICES IN MEDICARE**—Eliminates co-payments for preventive services and exempts preventive services from deductibles under the Medicare program.
- **IMPROVES HELP FOR LOW-INCOME MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES**—Improves the low-income protection programs in Medicare to assure more individuals are able to access this vital help.
- **PROVIDES NEW CONSUMER PROTECTIONS IN MEDICARE ADVANTAGE**— Prohibits Medicare Advantage plans from charging enrollees higher cost-sharing for services in their private plan than what is charged in traditional Medicare.
- **IMMEDIATE SUNSHINE ON PRICE GOUGING**—Discourages excessive price increases by insurance companies through review and disclosure of insurance rate increases.
- **CONTINUITY FOR DISPLACED WORKERS**—Allows Americans to keep their COBRA

coverage until the Exchange is in place and they can access affordable coverage.

- **CREATES NEW, VOLUNTARY, PUBLIC LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE PROGRAM**—Creates a long-term care insurance program to be financed by voluntary payroll deductions to provide benefits to adults who become functionally disabled.
- **HELP FOR EARLY RETIREES**—Creates a \$10 billion fund to finance a temporary reinsurance program to help offset the costs of expensive health claims for employers that provide health benefits for retirees age 55-64.
- **COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS**—Increases funding for Community Health Centers to allow for a doubling of the number of patients seen by the centers over the next 5 years.
- **INCREASING NUMBER OF PRIMARY CARE DOCTORS** — Provides new investment in training programs to increase the number of primary care doctors, nurses, and public health professionals.

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